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Security Council
Fifty-fifth Year

Provisional

4092nd Meeting
Monday, 24 January 2000, 10 a.m.
New York

President:	Mrs. Albright	(United States of America)
Members:	Argentina	Mr. Listre
	Bangladesh	Mr. Chowdhury
	Canada	Mr. Axworthy
	China	Mr. Qin Huasun
	France	Mr. Josselin
	Jamaica	Miss Durrant
	Malaysia	Mr. Mohammad Kamal
	Mali	Mr. Sokona
	Namibia	Mr. Gurirab
	Netherlands	Mr. Hamer
	Russian Federation	Mr. Lavrov
	Tunisia	Mr. Ben Mustapha
	Ukraine	Mr. Yel'chenko
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Hain

Agenda

The situation concerning the Democratic Republic of the Congo

00-25714 (E)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.05 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation concerning the Democratic Republic of the Congo

The President: I should like to inform the Council that I have received letters from the representatives of Algeria, Belgium, Brazil, Burundi, Colombia, Egypt, Eritrea, India, Israel, Japan, Lesotho, the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Norway, Portugal, South Africa and the United Republic of Tanzania, in which they request to be invited to participate in the discussion of the item on the Council's agenda. In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite those representatives to participate in the discussion, without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Rahal (Algeria), Mr. Wouters (Belgium), Mr. Fonseca (Brazil), Mr. Neturuye (Burundi), Mr. Valdivieso (Colombia), Mr. Darwish (Egypt), Mr. Menkerios (Eritrea), Mr. Sharma (India), Mr. Lancry (Israel), Mr. Takasu (Japan), Mr. Mangoaela (Lesotho), Mr. Dorda (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya), Mr. Brattakar (Norway), Mr. Monteiro (Portugal), Mr. Kumalo (South Africa) and Mr. Mwakawago (United Republic of Tanzania) took seats at the Council table.

The President: In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations, I shall take it that the Security Council agrees to extend an invitation under rule 39 of its provisional rules of procedure to the Secretary-General of the Organization of African Unity, Mr. Salim Ahmed Salim, and to the facilitator of the internal Congolese dialogue, Sir Ketumile Masire.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

It is now my high honour and privilege to invite the Secretary-General and the Chief of Protocol to escort Sir Ketumile Masire, facilitator of the internal Congolese dialogue, to a seat at the Council table.

It is now my high honour and privilege to invite the Secretary-General and the Chief of Protocol to escort Mr. Salim Ahmed Salim to a seat at the Council table.

Invitation to His Excellency Mr. Laurent-Désiré Kabila, President of the Democratic Republic of the Congo

The President: It is now my high honour and privilege to invite the Secretary-General and the Chief of Protocol to escort His Excellency Mr. Laurent-Désiré Kabila, President of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, to a seat at the Council table.

Mr. Laurent-Désiré Kabila, President of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, was escorted to a seat at the Council table.

Invitation to His Excellency Mr. Pasteur Bizimungu, President of the Republic of Rwanda

The President: It is now my high honour and privilege to invite the Secretary-General and the Chief of Protocol to escort His Excellency Mr. Pasteur Bizimungu, President of the Republic of Rwanda, to a seat at the Council table.

Mr. Pasteur Bizimungu, President of the Republic of Rwanda, was escorted to a seat at the Council table.

Invitation to His Excellency Mr. Frederick J.T. Chiluba, President of the Republic of Zambia

The President: It is now my high honour and privilege to invite the Secretary-General and the Chief of Protocol to escort His Excellency Mr. Frederick J.T. Chiluba, President of the Republic of Zambia, to a seat at the Council table.

Mr. Frederick J.T. Chiluba, President of the Republic of Zambia, was escorted to a seat at the Council table.

Invitation to His Excellency Mr. Joaquim Alberto Chissano, President of the Republic of Mozambique

The President: It is now my high honour and privilege to invite the Secretary-General and the Chief of Protocol to escort His Excellency Mr. Joaquim Alberto Chissano, President of the Republic of Mozambique, to a seat at the Council table.

Mr. Joaquim Alberto Chissano, President of the Republic of Mozambique, was escorted to a seat at the Council table.

Invitation to His Excellency Mr. Yoweri Kaguta Museveni, President of the Republic of Uganda

The President: It is now my high honour and privilege to invite the Secretary-General and the Chief of Protocol to escort His Excellency Mr. Yoweri Kaguta Museveni, President of the Republic of Uganda, to a seat at the Council table.

Mr. Yoweri Kaguta Museveni, President of the Republic of Uganda, was escorted to a seat at the Council table.

Invitation to His Excellency Mr. Robert G. Mugabe, President of the Republic of Zimbabwe

The President: It is now my high honour and privilege to invite the Secretary-General and the Chief of Protocol to escort His Excellency Mr. Robert G. Mugabe, President of the Republic of Zimbabwe, to a seat at the Council table.

Mr. Robert G. Mugabe, President of the Republic of Zimbabwe, was escorted to a seat at the Council table.

Invitation to His Excellency Mr. José Eduardo dos Santos, President of the Republic of Angola

The President: It is now my high honour and privilege to invite the Secretary-General and the Chief of Protocol to escort His Excellency Mr. José Eduardo dos Santos, President of the Republic of Angola, to a seat at the Council table.

Mr. José Eduardo dos Santos, President of the Republic of Angola, was escorted to a seat at the Council table.

Welcome to Foreign Ministers

The President: I am pleased to acknowledge that at this meeting of the Security Council Canada and Namibia are represented by their Ministers for Foreign Affairs, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland by the Minister of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, France by the Minister Delegate for Cooperation and Francophonie, and Mali by the Minister of the Armed Forces.

I should like to acknowledge and welcome the presence of other Ministers for Foreign Affairs in the Council Chamber today. Their presence is an affirmation of the importance of the subject matter to be addressed. The spirit of cooperation demonstrated by all those present here, which has made this very important meeting possible, is greatly appreciated by all of us.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Security Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

The Security Council indeed feels like home to me. I had the honour of presiding over the Council many times as Permanent Representative of the United States of America, and as Secretary of State I am proud to have been in the Chair during the ministerial meetings on Africa in 1997, and to have participated in the follow-up session, in 1998. I spent many long hours here discussing important issues of war and peace. Memory softens judgement, so I cannot recall a single dull moment; but it is fair to say that the deliberations this month on Africa are a particularly creative use of the Council Chamber. I am especially pleased to be able to preside over today's meeting.

Notable as well was the special appearance last Thursday of the Chairman of our Senate Foreign Relations Committee, and the presence Friday of the full Committee for a hearing. I believe it was very useful for the Council to hear all their views directly and for them to hear those of the Council members. Chairman Helms is a man of conviction and a strong advocate of a distinct point of view about the United Nations and America's relationship to it. He and I have made a point of working together where we can and making sure that when we disagree we do so agreeably. So let me be clear: only the President and the executive branch can speak for the United States.

Today, on behalf of the President, let me say that the Clinton Administration and I believe that most Americans see our role in the world and our relationship to this Organization quite differently than does Senator Helms. We believe in leading with other nations whenever that is possible. We strongly support the United Nations Charter and the Organization's purpose. We respect its rules, which we helped write. We want to

strengthen it through continued reform, and we recognize its many contributions to our own interests in a more secure, democratic and humane world.

The United Nations also provides a vital forum for the consideration of matters affecting security and peace, and that is what has brought us to this extraordinary meeting today. The presence of so many national leaders reflects the seriousness of the unresolved turmoil in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and their commitment to peace. Because of that nation's location and size, and because of the number of countries involved, the conflict there could be described as Africa's first world war. The continent cannot hope to meet the aspirations of its people until this war is history.

In today's meeting, and in succeeding days, I hope we will make decisive progress. But if that is to happen, reciprocal actions will be required.

The parties must detail in a credible fashion their plans for meeting the commitments they have made. The Council and the international community must respond with their plans for supporting the transition from conflict to cooperation.

We start with a firm foundation for progress in the form of the Lusaka Agreement. The leaders here today deserve great credit for negotiating and signing that Agreement. President Chiluba merits high praise for his diplomatic skill in facilitating it. The United States strongly supports the Agreement and urges all parties to live up to their obligations.

Under the Lusaka principles, the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Democratic Republic of the Congo will be restored and thereafter respected. The all-important process of dialogue within the Democratic Republic will go forward.

Foreign troops will be required to withdraw in a lawful and orderly manner. Concrete mechanisms will be established to ensure that the Congo will not be used as a safe haven for illegal armed groups from any country.

These are the steps that can guide Central Africa down the path to security for all. This is the way to fulfil the region's vast economic potential. This is the option the overwhelming majority of people urgently desire. No one will gain from continued conflict. No one will lose what is rightfully theirs from peace.

The primary responsibility for implementing these steps rests with the parties, including the rebel groups. The international community, including the United States, can and does condemn the violation of the Democratic Republic of the Congo's territorial integrity by foreign troops, but we cannot compel the withdrawal of those troops. Nor can we conduct an internal dialogue. But we can help make responsibilities easier to fulfil, and the United States is doing its part.

First, we have lent steady and strong diplomatic support to the Lusaka process.

Secondly, we are providing $1 million to assist the work of the Joint Military Commission (JMC). We urge cooperation by all parties in working with the JMC to implement the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration process under Chapter VII of the United Nations Charter and in accordance with the Lusaka Agreement.

Thirdly, we will work with Congress to provide $1 million this year to support President Masire's effort to facilitate the Congolese national dialogue. This is vital because such a dialogue can be a critical step not only towards ending the current conflict, but also in preventing future ones. It can lay the foundation for political processes in the Democratic Republic of the Congo that have broad public support and for institutions of government that could make the Democratic Republic as democratic in practice as it is in its name.

Fourthly, the United States strongly supports Special Representative Morjane's efforts to curb human rights abuses, prevent atrocities and expand humanitarian relief. The most disturbing aspect of the conflict in the Democratic Republic of the Congo has been the horrific abuse of fundamental human rights by all sides. We have even heard credible reports recently of women being buried alive in the eastern part of the country.

There is no rationale of past grievance, political allegiance or ethnic difference that excuses murder, torture, rape or other abuse. Here, today, together, we must vow to halt these crimes and to bring those who commit them to justice under due process of law.

Finally, provided our efforts this week result in renewed impetus towards implementation of the peace Agreement, we will consult with our Congress and work to achieve a swift Council consensus on authorizing deployment of a phase-two United Nations peace mission.

To succeed, any such mission must be based on commitments from the Lusaka signatories on the key issues of access, security and cooperation. As the Secretary-General will attest, we have learned much over the past decade about the "dos" and "don'ts" of United Nations missions. We must apply those lessons firmly and realistically in this case. But we must also be resolute in our determination to help the Democratic Republic of the Congo move from war to peace.

Once again, I congratulate the Secretary-General and Ambassador Holbrooke on convening this meeting, and I am so pleased that so many leaders are here. I look forward to a very productive discussion and to a dialogue that will help us all move further down the road to stability and prosperity in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and all of Africa.

I now call on the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Mr. Kofi Annan.

The Secretary-General: I would like to begin by paying tribute to Secretary of State Albright and Ambassador Holbrooke for their extraordinary efforts in convening yet another in a series of important meetings during the United States presidency of the Security Council. They are making the world sit up and take greater notice of Africa. That is an accomplishment we must applaud and of which they can be proud.

It is remarkable to see so many African leaders gathered in this Chamber. You have travelled long distances in an effort to resolve a conflict that has brought so much suffering to so many people and for so long. The political distance still to be travelled is even greater. But that is your responsibility as leaders, and this is your opportunity to serve the African people and enlist international support for peace and stability on the continent.

When war again erupted in the Democratic Republic of the Congo in August 1998, barely a year had elapsed since the end of the country's previous conflict, which itself had followed decades of dictatorship and misrule.

In succeeding months, violence intensified. Human rights violations multiplied. Today, millions of people are trying to eke out an existence amid chronic insecurity, economic despair and widespread disregard for international humanitarian law.

Massive numbers of refugees, internally displaced persons and other vulnerable men and women are unsure of shelter or their next meal. The recruitment of child soldiers continues, with thousands serving as combatants. Unaccompanied minors have been reported in large numbers. The entire subregion has been engulfed in a crisis of such complexity that it continues to defy our best efforts to resolve it.

On a long list of needs, wisdom and statesmanship, as well as an understanding of the limits of the use of force, are at the top.

In July last year, a mediation effort led by President Chiluba of Zambia on behalf of the Southern Africa Development Community (SADC), and with the support of the Organization of African Unity (OAU), resulted in the signing of the Lusaka Peace Agreement. Since then, however, there have been many ceasefire violations which have caused fresh suffering. The deployment of United Nations military liaison officers has been obstructed, undermining confidence in the implementation process. The belligerents must do better.

The Lusaka Agreement remains the most viable blueprint for resolving grievances and for achieving a comprehensive negotiated solution. But if peace is to take hold, and if international engagement is to be sustained, the warring parties face a paramount challenge: they need to demonstrate the political will to apply the agreement fully, without further delay. All else flows from that essential requirement.

Ultimately, we will find a sustainable solution to this crisis only if we address its root causes. That is why the drafters of the Lusaka Agreement placed inter-Congolese negotiations at the heart of the process. That dialogue is indispensable. The Congolese signatories, with the assistance of the OAU, have taken an encouraging first step in designating Sir Ketumile Masire, former President of Botswana, as the neutral facilitator for these negotiations. His prestige, expertise and moral authority can help reinvigorate the Lusaka process.

The United Nations, for its part, has been actively involved in the search for a peaceful solution since the start of the conflict. We have supported the efforts of President Chiluba and the OAU. We have made significant contributions through the missions carried out by my former Special Envoy, Moustapha Niasse. And now, my new Special Representative for the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Kamel Morjane, will contribute

his utmost to the peace process. I also have in the region my Special Representative for the Great Lakes region, Berhanu Dinka, who will be exploring how the United Nations can help unravel the regional problems that have impeded progress. And the United Nations mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, if given the necessary cooperation and allowed to do its job, can help foster confidence among the parties and keep the peace process on track.

If the United Nations is to make the right kind of difference in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and is to avoid the wrong turns that have led to tragic consequences elsewhere, we must be ready not only to act, but to act in a way that is commensurate with the gravity of the situation. Whether that means intense political engagement, a sustained commitment of resources or decisive action in the face of unforeseen circumstances, we must see this involvement through.

At the same time, we must guard against creating inflated expectations of what can be realistically expected from the United Nations. And we must never lose sight of our central dependence on the compliance of the parties involved. Whether we are speaking of the political process, of military deployments or of protection for humanitarian and other United Nations personnel, the parties themselves bear primary responsibility for adhering to commitments and creating the conditions conducive to progress.

Time is of the essence. By their presence here at today's meeting and at tomorrow's mini-summit, the leaders in this Chamber have a chance to reaffirm their commitment to the Lusaka Agreement. The peace process is fragile; leadership can strengthen it. Millions of civilians are suffering grievously; leadership can inspire them and give them hope.

The United Nations is here to help. But the United Nations has also had bitter experiences of help gone wrong. This has made Member States profoundly uneasy, and has raised the threshold of persuasion for new involvements, even when suffering claims our attention and when solidarity demands that we act. If this is an illness of our international system, leadership can provide an antidote.

The challenge facing these leaders is to reach consensus with one another, and to transform that consensus into action. That will lay the groundwork for progress to be made on their own. Just as important, it will offer a convincing argument in favour of the international support that Africa merits and that can help bring about a decisive change for the better.

The President: I thank the Secretary-General for the kind words he addressed to the United States presidency.

I call now on His Excellency Mr. Frederick J.T. Chiluba, President of the Republic of Zambia.

President Chiluba: First of all, let me apologize to you, Madam President, and to Ambassador Holbrooke for my failure to meet with you last night. I hope that was not a sign of an undeclared war between Britain and Zambia, because I was badly attacked in England by flu only two hours after my arrival. I thought that was not in retaliation for the death of Dr. Livingstone, who was killed by malaria in my country.

I wish sincerely to congratulate Ambassador Richard Holbrooke and the Government of the United States of America for devoting the United States presidency of the Security Council to African issues. The Council has held discussions on HIV/AIDS, on refugees and internally displaced persons, on the war in Angola and on the Burundi conflict, as well as the current discussion of the implementation of the Ceasefire Agreement in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. These are issues that have direct, immediate and severe consequences for my country.

By devoting a month to African issues, the Security Council is acknowledging that Africa is an important part of the international community, and that any threats to peace and security on the continent inevitably threaten international peace and security. The United Nations stands today both as a monument to humanity's greatest folly and as an embodiment of our collective wisdom and commitment to the permanent preservation of international peace and security. It is thus a fitting tribute to the foresight of the founding fathers of the United Nations that the Security Council, the body specifically entrusted with primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security, is holding discussions on important African issues that pose a threat to that peace.

Our discussion today, and for the rest of this week, focuses on the implementation of the Ceasefire Agreement in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, a country with which my country, Zambia, shares its longest international boundary and close historical and cultural ties.

In September last year, I had an opportunity to address both the Security Council and the General Assembly on this same subject. At the time, we had just managed to secure the remaining signatures to the Ceasefire Agreement. I appealed to the Security Council in particular, and to the international community in general, through the General Assembly, to undertake a number of steps to ensure the speedy and full implementation of the Agreement.

According to the calendar for the implementation of the Ceasefire Agreement, which the parties had agreed upon, most of the activities should have been completed by this time, including the inter-Congolese national dialogue, establishment of new institutions, exchange of prisoners and disarmament of armed groups. Deployment of the United Nations peacekeeping mission would long since have begun and the orderly withdrawal of foreign forces from the Democratic Republic of the Congo would be in its final stages of completion.

It is common knowledge that the implementation of the Ceasefire Agreement is way behind schedule in almost all respects. The question is: why is this so?

Could it be that our enthusiasm and optimism were premised on unrealistic expectations? I do not think so. The calendar was implementable as it was. Could it be that the parties lacked the political will to follow through on what they had committed themselves to in the Agreement? I do not think so either. Why, then, has the Agreement not been implemented on schedule?

I would be the first to admit that we have encountered a number of difficulties that have contributed to delays in implementing the Agreement. Yes, we have had some violations of the Agreement and, yes, indeed, there have been problems of accessibility of the United Nations Organization Mission (MONUC) and Organization of African Unity (OAU) neutral investigators to some parts of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, thus making the work of these important bodies difficult. In addition, coordination between MONUC, the OAU and the Joint Military Commission (JMC) took some time to sort out.

I do not, however, subscribe to the notion that these problems were so big as to become insurmountable. Indeed, it is to the credit of the parties that, in spite of the difficulties, they have remained committed to the Ceasefire Agreement and have, without exception, repeatedly reaffirmed this commitment. To this effect, the parties have made every effort, particularly through the JMC, to address the problems.

When reports of Ceasefire violations were becoming persistent, the JMC established four regional JMCs inside the Democratic Republic of the Congo and deployed OAU investigators to three of these. Arrangements for deployment to the fourth regional JMC at Kabalo are being made. When a stand-off between the allied forces and those of the Congolese Rally for Democracy (RDC) happened at Ikela, the JMC appointed a neutral committee comprising Zambia as Chairman, MONUC and the OAU to find an amicable solution.

Another positive development has been the acknowledgement by the parties themselves that the calendar needed to be adjusted in view of the delays in the implementation process. A proposed new calendar has since been worked out by the JMC and approved in principle by the Political Committee, which met in Harare on 17 and 18 January 2000. The parties are working to ensure that the calendar is finalised as soon as possible. In addition to all the parties reaffirming their commitment to the Ceasefire Agreement during the Political Committee meeting, the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo used the opportunity to pledge its readiness to facilitate access of MONUC and the OAU investigators to the various areas inside the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

Lastly, but by no means the least, on 15 December 1999 the Congolese parties, with the assistance of the OAU Secretary-General, unanimously selected Sir Ketumile Masire, former President of Botswana, as the neutral facilitator for the inter-Congolese negotiations.

One of the major causes of the delay in implementing the Ceasefire Agreement has been lack of funds for the Joint Military Commission. In the first instance, the pledged contributions made by the international community have not been adequate to meet all the needs of the JMC. Worse still, most of the pledged contributions are yet to be made available to the JMC. As a result, it took time for the JMC to be effectively established and deployed in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. For some time, therefore, there was a vacuum in areas where the JMC should have had a presence to ensure that implementation of the Ceasefire Agreement was proceeding according to the schedule.

I have felt compelled to highlight some of the positive developments not so much to deny the existence

of any problems, nor am I suggesting that we, the parties, cannot bear any responsibility whatsoever for any of the problems that have affected the implementation of the Agreement. Not at all. Rather, I have made this point in order to demonstrate that the parties are irrevocably committed to the Ceasefire Agreement, contrary to the notion that seems to have gained currency among some members of the international community that the Lusaka Agreement is all but dead. It is not.

The conflict in the Democratic Republic of the Congo is very real, and the Ceasefire Agreement is an effort to deal with this real situation. In the real world there are few, if any, perfect situations. It goes without saying, therefore, that an agreement that seeks to resolve a problem as real and as complex as that obtaining in the Democratic Republic of the Congo cannot be expected to be perfect. The difficulties that have arisen during implementation are to be expected and do not invalidate the Agreement at all.

We are, therefore, very concerned when we hear about what appear to be preconditions being raised in regard to the Democratic Republic of the Congo. The international community is reluctant to send peacekeepers to the Democratic Republic of the Congo unless the Lusaka Agreement registers a perfect score on some performance chart. To the best of my knowledge, no other ceasefire agreement anywhere in the world has been subjected to this test. If such were to be done, I am confident that not a single one would pass the test at all.

There is no peacekeeping that does not involve some degree of risk. We are involved in peacekeeping because peace is an imperative for the survival of humankind: it is an imperative for which we must be prepared to make the supreme sacrifice.

We are not here suggesting that the international community should indulge in reckless adventure in the name of peacekeeping. Not at all. No. Every loss of life is a tragedy. It is, therefore, incumbent upon all of us, and in particular the parties to the conflict in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, that the peacekeepers are given all necessary support and protection. After all, it is we, the parties to the conflict and to the Agreement, who have requested the peacekeepers. We consider peacekeepers as allies, not adversaries.

The opportunity that has been provided for the leaders of the region to discuss the implementation of the Ceasefire Agreement in the Democratic Republic of the Congo is a truly unique and important one. We hope that the discussion will not be considered as an end in itself, with no concrete results at the end.

By coming here, regional leaders have come to demonstrate their commitment to the Ceasefire Agreement for the Democratic Republic of the Congo and their determination to implement it. We hope that this discussion will lead to greater support for the Agreement from the international community. Specifically, we seek the following support from the Security Council and from the international community at large.

Firstly, we would like to see quick action in regard to the deployment of the United Nations military observers and peacekeepers. In this respect, we are in agreement with the general thrust of the arrangements contained in Secretary-General Annan's report S/2000/30 of 17 January 2000.

Secondly, we would like to appeal to the international community to make more resources available to the JMC. To this end, I wish to sincerely commend those countries which have made contributions or pledges to the JMC. Unfortunately, most of the pledges have not been honoured, and I would like to take this opportunity to make a special plea to the countries concerned to please speed up payment of their pledges.

Thirdly, we wish to appeal for support for the facilitator of the inter-Congolese dialogue, Sir Ketumile Masire — and it was pleasant to hear you, Madam Secretary, pledge that. The facilitator urgently needs resources — human, financial and material — to enable him undertake necessary preliminary work and to sustain his important functions during the National Dialogue.

Last but not least, the international community should provide the necessary and adequate resources to support the national dialogue.

The resolution of the conflict in the Democratic Republic of the Congo should not be an "us-versus-them" action at all. The parties to the conflict, and its immediate victims, may be African, and the Ceasefire Agreement may have been signed by Africans, but it is not "their" conflict or "their" Agreement. The fact that this matter is today being discussed by the Security Council, the body that bears primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security, is an

acknowledgement of this fact, and we are pleased about this.

All of us who have the privilege of serving on the Security Council do so in trust and on behalf of all the States Members of the United Nations. This body is therefore our Security Council, collectively. The conflict in the Democratic Republic of the Congo is thus our collective responsibility. If the Ceasefire Agreement fails to be implemented, it will be our failure — that of each and every Member of the United Nations.

The President: I would like to thank the President of the Republic of Zambia for his very, very important statement, especially in view of the fact that he represented the Southern African Development Community (SADC) during difficult negotiations. I am very glad that the flu did not fell him and that he is here to speak. I wish also to thank him for the very kind words he addressed to the American presidency.

I now give the floor to His Excellency Mr. Joaquim Alberto Chissano, President of the Republic of Mozambique.

President Chissano: Allow me to begin by congratulating you, Madam, on your presidency of this meeting and for the brilliant manner in which you are conducting the affairs of the Council.

The initiative of the United States presidency to convene this meeting to debate the situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo is not only commendable but also of paramount importance in defining an informed course of action to put an end to the prolonged conflict in the Great Lakes region.

We also commend the United States Government for taking the important initiative of declaring January the month of Africa in the Security Council. Our sincere hope is that the deliberations of the Security Council will be very successful and achieve concrete results that will ease the suffering of Africans.

The unprecedented presence of so many African heads of State or Government before the Security Council bears testimony to our resolve to find an immediate and peaceful solution to the conflict in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. It is also clear evidence of our resolve to put an end to conflicts in Africa and focus our efforts on promoting sustainable development throughout the continent.

I would also like to pay a special tribute to your predecessor, Sir Jeremy Greenstock, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of the United Kingdom, for the diligent manner in which he guided the work of the Council last month, focusing also on Africa.

I wish also to express my profound appreciation to the Secretary-General for his comprehensive report on the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and for his relentless efforts and dedication to the cause of peace not only in the Democratic Republic of the Congo but indeed in the entire world.

A durable solution to the conflict in the Democratic Republic of the Congo requires strong, concerted action from the subregion, the continent and the international community as a whole. Only then will the heavy loss of human lives come to an end, and peace and political stability will be restored in that sisterly country and in the region. Only then will we have a united Democratic Republic of the Congo, with common aspirations shared by all legitimate political forces in a peaceful environment — a nation at peace with itself and its neighbours.

We the leaders of the region and of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) are deeply concerned about the conflict in the Democratic Republic of the Congo in view of its strategic position for peace, security and stability in Central and southern Africa in particular and in Africa in general.

This is so because we strongly believe that the success of all socio-economic policies and indeed of any plans for development rests upon the eradication of all focus of conflicts in our region and the attainment and maintenance of peace and stability.

It was bearing in mind the reasons I outlined earlier that the region, under the wise leadership of President Chiluba of Zambia, carried out a process that culminated with the signature of the Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement and its annexes by all belligerent parties on 10 July 1999. By taking the bold decision of signing this Agreement, the belligerents have shown their commitment, determination and willingness to bring about peace in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

With this development, we had hoped to see a cessation of hostilities and an end to the suffering of the Congolese people. Instead, we became concerned, at

times, at the lack of progress in the implementation of the Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement. However, we now feel encouraged by the holding last week in Lusaka of the meeting of the Joint Military Commission and in Harare of the meeting of the ministerial Political Committee established by the Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement, where the Parties reiterated their firm resolve to respect all the provisions of the Agreement. Having noted that some of these provisions had already been implemented, they solemnly recommitted themselves to implementing the remaining ones on the basis of the revised calendar, and called upon all the parties to ensure the prevalence of conditions necessary for the successful implementation of the Agreement.

At the SADC extraordinary summit held in Maputo earlier this month, the regional heads of State or Government evaluated the degree of implementation of the Lusaka Agreement and reviewed the work of the commissions with a view to the adoption of appropriate measures for the rapid normalization of the situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. SADC strongly believes that for a peaceful settlement of the conflict in that country, the Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement remains the only valid instrument. We also believe that any solution to the conflict in the Democratic Republic of the Congo demands a strong and structured partnership between the United Nations, the Organization of African Unity (OAU) and SADC in order to guarantee an expeditious implementation of the Lusaka Agreement, signed by all parties involved in the conflict.

The international community has played a significant role in the search for peace in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. While expressing our appreciation for the contribution rendered so far, we must underscore the need for a more timely and effective action at this crucial stage of the Congolese peace process.

The ceasefire in the Democratic Republic of the Congo is, like any other ceasefire, fragile and sensitive, with difficulties inherent in its holding. However, these difficulties should not deter the taking of necessary actions to prevent its unravelling. Therefore, the international community should not wait for a perfect ceasefire in the Democratic Republic of the Congo to play a meaningful role in this country's peace process, or sit idle and witness the collapse of the process.

The actions of the United Nations must also be seen as supportive to the quick confidence-building necessary to the parties for a smooth disengagement, demobilization and disarmament, and, more importantly, for a successful internal dialogue.

The appointment by the parties of a Facilitator of that dialogue in the person of Sir Ketumile Masire, former President of Botswana, constitutes a great breakthrough. We thank him for having accepted this challenge. Knowing his brilliant qualities as a statesman of long experience, and with his love of peace, we are confident that he will succeed in his endeavours.

In processes such as this one, any momentum should always be seized to foster progress and protect positive agreements.

In the ongoing international efforts to bring about peace in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the United Nations Secretary-General has played a very important role. We applaud his actions, particularly the appointment of his Special Representative, Ambassador Kamel Morjane, the sending of a Special Envoy to solve problems on the ground, his various reports to the Security Council and the deployment of 79 military observers. We encourage him to continue his efforts towards a durable peace in that sisterly country. We are confident that the presence of the United Nations on the ground will deter violations of the ceasefire and restore hope to the suffering Congolese people.

The Security Council has the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security. The Council should not, therefore, transfer this responsibility solely to the belligerents, to the neighbouring countries or to the region. The belligerents have already created enough of a basis for us, as the United Nations, to take up our responsibilities. We would be the ones to blame if, by our hesitation, we were to let the situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo deteriorate. The decision to devote the month of January to debating African issues, such as AIDS and the conflicts in Burundi, Angola and the Democratic Republic of the Congo, to mention just a few, is for us a clear indication of the importance the Security Council attaches to African problems.

The moment has now come for the United Nations to assume its responsibility with regard to the Democratic Republic of the Congo. In this regard, SADC member States call on the Security Council to adopt concrete measures to implement expeditiously the Lusaka Agreement. Time is of the essence, because a lost opportunity may never be recovered.

In one of his reports, the Secretary-General requested the Security Council to authorize the deployment of 500 military liaison observers as the next stage of deployment of the United nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC). We feel that the Secretary-General has made this proposal in awareness of the difficult situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, but also based on the tasks so far accomplished. SADC supports the Secretary-General's proposal and urges the Security Council to adopt a resolution authorizing the deployment of the military liaison observers as the next step for a subsequent, robust United Nations presence in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. It should be made clear that this is only an intermediary phase for the speedy deployment of a full-fledged United Nations peacekeeping operation.

We firmly believe that the situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo can no longer afford further delays in the establishment of a full-fledged United Nations peacekeeping mission with an appropriate mandate under Chapter VII and with adequate numbers, taking into account the size of the country and the magnitude and complexity of the conflict. This United Nations mission should be provided with the necessary logistical means for its successful operation.

The conflict in the Democratic Republic of the Congo has resulted in the unfolding of a humanitarian tragedy in that country. As stated in the Secretary-General's report (S/2000/30), a large number of people are facing critical food insecurity. There are also a large number of internally displaced persons and refugees. To these problems, we can add the high rate of disease. The situation demands urgent action. We appeal to the international community to provide humanitarian assistance for those in need, as well as resources for the process of national reconstruction.

What credibility would the Security Council have if its role were converted into keeping the peace only in countries where the people of the country had already done so fully? We recall the sad moment in 1992 in Mozambique, when we had to wait for over six months after the signing of the pace agreement, keeping peace by ourselves while both belligerent parties still had their weapons in their hands, before the arrival of the international peacekeepers. Only we, the Mozambicans, in spite of the praise we received from the international community, know the damage caused to our country by that delay and hesitation — hesitation, yes, not only in sending forces on time, but also in allocating substantial resources for the process of reintegration of demobilized persons and for the creation of new institutions to pursue efficiently the maintenance of peace and security for our citizens after the withdrawal of the United Nations forces.

Let us give the United Nations a chance to reinforce its credibility before its member States and humanity. This is an opportunity; let us decide now.

The President: I thank the President of the Republic of Mozambique for his very important statement. I also note his current chairmanship of the Southern African Development Community (SADC); I think this gives added weight to some of the points that he has made. I would also like to thank him for his kind words addressed to the American presidency.

I now call on Mr. Laurent-Désiré Kabila, President of the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

President Kabila (*spoke in French*): The Democratic Republic of the Congo is glad that the Security Council has convened this special meeting on the war of aggression imposed on it by Rwanda, Uganda and Burundi since 2 August 1998. Indeed, only the strict observance by every member of the United Nations of the principles enshrined in the Charter, as the Council well knows, makes it possible to establish and maintain international peace and security, which is the paramount purpose of the United nations, as explicitly set forth in Article I of the Charter.

I welcome the Security Council's awareness of this situation after more than 18 months of breaches of peace and security and violations of the political independence, national sovereignty and territorial integrity of a United Nations Member State by other Member States.

Before continuing, I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate the American presidency of the Security Council in the month of January 2000 for taking this welcome initiative.

In 1997, the brave Congolese people, under my leadership and under that of many other compatriots who had the same beliefs, put an end to 32 years of the most corrupt dictatorship in Africa. We did not take on this act of salvation in order to prolong the suffering of our people; we did it so that the Democratic Republic of the Congo could resume its seat in the concert of nations, at a time of unprecedented regional and global change.

Despite the aggression against my country, I was bold enough to sign the Lusaka Agreement because I am a man of peace and because the Congolese people want peace. I am here in New York today, visiting for the first time, because the Lusaka Agreement is deadlocked. The Agreement is not working, and the Congolese people's thirst for peace has not been quenched.

Even though history has not always been kind to my country, we are a people that knows how to forgive, and I am here today once again to offer my hand of reconciliation to those who have done us harm. For this goodwill to be effective, it must be mutual. Here, I would like to highlight that the Lusaka Agreement has failed to achieve its objectives. The Agreement, which is based on Security Council resolution 1234 (1999), will not be able to restore peace to our region unless it demands, first, a real and immediate ceasefire; secondly, a deployment of United Nations forces that would systematically replace the troops of the aggressor countries; thirdly, the immediate and unconditional withdrawal of the uninvited aggressor forces; and, lastly, the positioning of United Nations forces along the borders between the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the aggressor countries.

The Congolese people and their Government therefore hope that during the course of this special meeting, the Council will be able to achieve agreement to end the occupation of a part of our national territory by the occupying armies of Rwanda, Uganda and Burundi, in conformity with the provisions of resolution 1234 (1999), which, in paragraph 2,

> "*Deplores* the continuing fighting and the presence of forces of foreign States in the Democratic Republic of the Congo in a manner inconsistent with the principles of the Charter of the United Nations, and *calls upon* those States to bring to an end the presence of these uninvited forces and to take immediate steps to that end".

Together with our allies in the Southern African Development Community (SADC), we are currently trying to ensure respect for the principle of the maintenance of the territorial integrity of our country. We are not doing so in a spirit of ill will towards our neighbours, even though they are occupying a large part of our territory.

Let us recall that Article 2, paragraphs 3 and 4, of the Charter of the United Nations requires Members to settle their international disputes by peaceful means. It also calls on them to refrain from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any State, or in any other manner inconsistent with the purposes of the United Nations. Those are the words of the United Nations Charter.

As soon as we came to power, we announced a political democratization programme, designed to lead to the organization of free and transparent elections within two years. Only the war prevented us from completing that programme, parts of which had already begun, in particular the elaboration of a draft constitution by a commission on institutional reform and the convening of a constituent assembly.

As for the argument about our pursuit of the Interahamwe and other armed groups that are present in our territory, I should like to say here and now that that argument is as fallacious as others that have been made. I should simply like to say to this Council that my Government cannot ally itself, and will never ally itself, with people who carry out genocide. We condemn the genocide that took place in Rwanda in 1994, just as we strongly condemn the massacre of hundreds of thousands of women, children and elderly people during our struggle against the dictatorship of Mobutu by my former allies, who today are invading my country. They have never answered to that charge.

On the other hand, the evidence provided by prisoners of war and Rwandan deserters, corroborated by the reports of certain non-governmental human rights organizations, have exposed the forcible recruitment by the Kigali authorities of Hutu prisoners and adolescents to serve as cannon fodder in their nefarious war against the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

Is there anyone who has not heard of the massacres in Kasika, Makobola, Ngweshe, Burinye, Kamituga, Kasala, Budi and Mwenga? All of us have witnessed the fighting in Kisangani, in Congolese territory, between the Rwandan aggressors and their Ugandan accomplices — confrontations during which, in addition to killing 200 Congolese, who were outnumbered, the aggressors intentionally destroyed more than 300 million doses of anti-poliomyelitis vaccine, thereby putting more than 6 million Congolese children in occupied territory at risk of contracting that lifelong disease.

Is there anyone here who is unaware of the systematic plundering of Congolese resources on and below the ground by the Rwandan, Ugandan and Burundi occupiers? Their booty — wood, diamonds, gold, cobalt

and zebras — is all being sold on the open market, including in some of the countries represented here today.

I do not need to continue with this macabre enumeration of atrocities of all kinds committed in the past, and still being committed, against our country by the forces of aggression, which, unfortunately, are being encouraged by the silence of the international community.

The fundamental question now is how we can put an immediate end to this situation, which is so intolerably humiliating to our people. Everyone must realize that there is now an urgent need to halt the illegal occupation, which is a flagrant, constant and ongoing violation of the Charter of the United Nations. Under these circumstances, is the Security Council justified in relying exclusively on the Lusaka Agreement to try to re-establish peace in the Democratic Republic of the Congo? Are we not entitled to ask what has happened to the great hopes raised by the signing, on 10 July 1999, of the Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement?

As far as we are concerned, we signed the Lusaka Agreement in order to regain peace and stability in our country and in the Great Lakes region. We are here today to determine the extent to which the Agreement can be made more effective.

We have proposed a solution aimed at restoring our security and that of our neighbours and at addressing the desire of the Congolese people to see the uninvited forces leave our territory, as stipulated in the Agreement. The Congolese people is eager to implement the initiative I launched about a year ago to convene a national debate. That initiative is now enshrined in the Lusaka Agreement, in which it is called the national dialogue.

What are the prospects for our country and the Great Lakes region? As soon as we came to power, we undertook various initiatives to consolidate peace and stability in our country and region. Domestically, we decreed a "revolution" to pardon all the former dignitaries of the old regime, whom we called upon to help us rebuild our country. In order to end ethnic antagonism in the eastern part of our country, we established a peace commission to maintain a climate of understanding and dialogue among the rival communities. In April 1999, we convened the national debate to enable the Congolese to speak among themselves and to define the basic principles on which the new democratic political order was to be based. We issued a general amnesty to allow political exiles and so-called rebels to return to the country and to begin rebuilding it with us.

At the regional level, aware of the danger posed to the peace, security and development of our region by the existence of uncontrolled armed groups, in May 1998 we organized, with the support of the specialized agencies of the United Nations, particularly the United Nations Development Programme, a conference on security and development in the Great Lakes region. Unfortunately, the conference failed to take place, as it was boycotted by those who are committing aggression against us today.

In the interests of peace and of respect for our international commitments in the field of human rights, I launched the convening of a pan-African forum on the demobilization and social reintegration of child soldiers, held from 6 to 10 December, in which 25 countries participated.

It was this desire for peace, respect for human rights and the democratization of our country that led us, in the context of the Lusaka Agreement, to accept the holding of the inter-Congolese dialogue. The dialogue's objectives are the same as those of the national debate that we convened in April 1999: to re-establish the people as the primary sovereign power and the sole source of legitimacy; to establish the rules to be applied to the exercise of power; and to outline the framework for the operation of political parties. In a word, it is a question of preparing the bases for the new democratic political order of which our people have so long been deprived.

In this respect, I wish to point out that, as our people understand it, the inter-Congolese dialogue is precisely and solely as I have described it. The Government encourages the initiatives of the Congolese religious denominations, which have proposed convening national consultations on the national dialogue on 21 February 2000, and we invite the international community to support them in this.

We are resolved to working together with any individual who shares our values of democracy and development in order to raise our country and the Great Lakes region from poverty, insecurity, instability and war.

We call on this institution to persuade our aggressors of the need to make similar efforts to establish peace within their own countries, a prerequisite to the establishment of peace throughout our region. That is

why we welcome the incorporation of our proposal to convene an international conference on the Great Lakes region into Security Council resolution 1234 (1999).

As far as I am concerned, I am ready to begin the national dialogue today. The Congolese people and I await the imminent arrival in Kinshasa of the new Facilitator, the former President of Botswana, Sir Ketumile Masire. We wish to assure him of our support and encourage him to establish contact with the religious groups and all those who seek peace so that, together, they can clear the way for the holding of the national dialogue.

We certainly need the United Nations, despite the fact that we had a bad experience with the Organization at the time of our independence. We recognize that, in the interim, the United Nations of which we are all Members has gained almost 40 years of experience in peacekeeping.

I myself wish publicly to express my support for the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and for the Special Representative of the Secretary-General. We had a few problems and misunderstandings early on in their deployment. I therefore wish to reassure the Security Council and the Secretary-General that my Government will do its utmost to ensure their security and to support the members of the Joint Military Commission when it is established in Kinshasa. I wish to reiterate in all solemnity that any Congolese who wishes to come to Kinshasa to participate in the national dialogue will be able to do so in full security.

My Government and I seek only peace and stability in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the Great Lakes region. We therefore seek the establishment of a system based on democratic principles and prosperity founded on the sound management of the economy and of my country's significant resources. On behalf of my Government and the Congolese people, I wish most sincerely to thank the President and members of the Security Council and the Secretary-General for having given us this opportunity to meet with a view to restoring peace and justice to my people.

I should like once again to reiterate to all members of the Security Council my country's full respect for the principles of the United Nations Charter, by which we are all bound.

To my friends, the heads of State present here today, I wish to say in all sincerity that they can count on me and my delegation to discuss openly and seriously the ways and means of putting an end to this tragic war, so that together we may rebuild a region in which our peoples can live in peace.

The President: I thank the President of the Democratic Republic of the Congo for his very important statement, and I appreciate very much his coming to the United States for this discussion about his country. I also thank him very much for his kind words addressed to the American presidency.

I now give the floor to His Excellency Mr. José Eduardo dos Santos, President of the Republic of Angola.

President dos Santos *(spoke in Portuguese; English text furnished by the delegation)*: I would like to thank the Council for having invited me to take part in this meeting of the Security Council dedicated to an analysis of the situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

At a time when we thought that, with the end of the so-called cold war, the world would embark upon a new era of peace and cooperation for development, events began to unfold in Africa that are frustrating many of our expectations. Local conflicts increased and the economic and social situation in many countries began to deteriorate. We also witnessed the emergence of other misfortunes, such as transnational crime, drug trafficking and intolerance of every nature, especially intolerance based on ethnic and religious grounds.

It is precisely to discuss one of these conflicts — the conflict in the Democratic Republic of the Congo — that we are gathered here today. The intensification and escalation of this conflict threaten to involve ever more neighbouring countries. This country, one of the largest in Africa, is extremely rich in natural resources. It has a population of over 50 million inhabitants and shares common borders with nine other countries. For many years it was ruled by a dictatorial regime that transformed the country into a permanent base for aggression and destabilization against all the countries of the region, especially Angola.

Poor governance, oppression and the failure of the economic system led the country into discredit at the international level and produced a chaotic domestic situation that forced hundreds of thousands of its citizens to immigrate to neighbouring countries, thereby compelling those countries to reinforce the control and protection of their borders. When the internal political opposition organized itself to confront the regime, some

of its members decided to carry out an armed struggle of national liberation from the eastern region. All the affected countries supported the forces of liberation and change for the establishment of democracy. Angola, of course, joined in that regional effort, together with Rwanda and Uganda.

In this context, Angola ended up a short time later assuming the role of a strategic ally in conducting the war and the political process that culminated with the victory of the Congolese people over the dictatorship. When the new Government was instituted and the then Zaire became the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the hopes of all the Congolese people were reborn. Taking into account the chaotic situation that existed and the heavy legacy it inherited, it was implicitly assumed that the Government would be given a grace period by its people and by the international community to re-establish peace, re-organize the political and economic systems and mobilize society so as to strengthen national unity and rebuild the country.

But that did not happen. Within less than a year, Angola was surprised by the outbreak of a new war in the country and was once again forced to intervene in order to avoid bloodshed and contain the threat of escalation of this new war on its borders. Once this threat to its own security was eliminated, as well as the threat of disintegration to this sister country, Angola immediately sought to join in the search for a solution to the internal conflict of the Democratic Republic of the Congo through dialogue and regional consultations.

Accordingly, the Angolan Government approved the results of the Pretoria meeting, as well as the principles adopted at the Victoria Falls summit held in Zimbabwe. Unfortunately, these principles were not fully incorporated into the Lusaka accords of July and August 1999. The omission of the principle that the legitimacy and authority of the present Government and President of the Democratic Republic of the Congo should be recognized leaves room for some confusion and uncertainty. A Government that has not been militarily defeated cannot accept to capitulate at the negotiating table.

The accords provide for a military and a political process to bring about a solution to the conflict in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. However, their principal shortcoming is that they limit to some extent the sovereignty of the power instituted and place it on an equal footing with the forces that oppose it through violent and illegal means. At the same time, external aggression is dealt with in a very moderate fashion.

It is also important to recognize that significant changes have occurred in the region since the signing of the accords. This new situation allows for a better understanding of the different links existing between the rebel forces in the region and, at the same time, creates better conditions for a rapid solution to the conflict in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. This is why the United Nations, in addition to guaranteeing the actions provided for in the accords — namely, the disarming and demilitarization of the rebel forces — also has an immediate and special responsibility to proceed to interpositioning and separating the warring forces so as to uphold the cease-fire and avoid new violations. To this end, we ask that the United Nations act expeditiously by sending peacekeeping forces and by increasing logistical and financial support.

With a view to making the Lusaka accords operational and speed up their implementation, allow me to make the following suggestions.

The disarmament of the rebel forces should be accelerated and a single national army should be formed. The authority of the present Government should be recognized as that of a Government of transition that should lead the country to legislative and presidential elections, to be held under the supervision of the international community. Security guarantees must be established for the installation of the rebel leaders in the country's capital and their integration into the transitional political process. National debate, or national dialogue, as it is being called here, should focus on discussion of a provisional constitution of the Republic, of electoral law and mechanisms for voter registration and of laws to regulate political parties. The new institutions should start operating as soon as elections are held. The elected parliament should play the role of a constituent assembly and be entrusted with approving the final constitution of the Republic.

The Great Lakes conflict is still ongoing and is closely linked to the development of the situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, where the ceasefire has been continuously violated and the rebel forces have not yet been disarmed, due to the lack of trust between the parties. Furthermore, the ways and means of disarming the Interahamwe forces, as provided for in the Lusaka accords, remain to be determined. These accords fail to offer any political guarantees for these elements.

It seems to me that there is also a need for an internal political agreement for Rwanda, Uganda and

Burundi. This way the the Great Lakes issue could be resolved. Therefore, the United Nations should commit itself to seeking a peaceful and democratic solution to this crisis. It should tackle this with the same seriousness as it has in crises of other parts of the world. Three years ago, we welcomed the proposals of the Secretary-General on Africa. These proposals entailed a programme of concrete actions designed to prevent and resolve regional conflicts and to accelerate development in African countries over the following decade, emphasizing the health and education of new generations as high priorities, among other far-reaching measures destined to achieve good governance and to strengthen and stabilize the democratic institutions.

We trust that at the end of these meetings, thanks to the wisdom and goods sense of members, concrete measures will be taken to affirm and consolidate peace and stability in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and across the entire Central African region, including the Great Lakes region.

Madam President, I wish you every success in your presidency.

The President: I thank the distinguished President of the Republic of Angola for his statement and for his kind words addressed to the American presidency.

I call on His Excellency Mr. Robert G. Mugabe, President of the Republic of Zimbabwe.

Mr. Mugabe: Madam President, we are pleased to see you chairing this special series of meetings of the Security Council on Africa devoted to the situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. We recall with satisfaction the special meeting of the Security Council also dealing with Africa, held in 1997 under the presidency of your country, which you also chaired. We welcome the interest your country has thus continued to demonstrate with regard to the problems facing the African continent.

We also wish to thank all the members of the Security Council who have actively supported the holding of this particular session, devoted exclusively to the pursuit of peace in the Democratic Republic of Congo. The Secretary-General, Mr. Kofi Annan, deserves our gratitude for the several reports and recommendations he has made to the Security Council on the need for peace in the Democratic Republic of Congo. Finally we all acknowledge that it is the drive and energy of Ambassador Richard Holbrooke which have brought us to this session on Africa. We thank you, Mr. Ambassador, for all the efforts you have exerted to bring this session about.

Madam President, as part of your "month of Africa" platform, the Security Council has deliberated on the scourge of HIV/AIDS in Africa, which you quite rightly identified as constituting a threat to the security of African States. You have also discussed the pathetic plight of refugees and displaced persons. I am advised that the Security Council, together with other international agencies, such as the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the World Bank and the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS), agreed that an effective strategy must be worked out to fight these scourges that are devastating the African continent. We join you, Madam President, in this crusade. We appeal to one and all to accept this challenge in the interest of humanity. Our mutual interests must make all of us acknowledge human interdependence and force us to embark on the task to mobilize international support against HIV/AIDS and in alleviation of the condition of African refugees, including internally displaced persons.

Furthermore, we note that the Council has already addressed the pressing problems of Angola and Burundi. However, today the Council is holding a special meeting devoted to the preservation of the territorial integrity of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, as enshrined in Chapter I, Article 2, of the United Nations Charter. We, the African leaders from the region, key actors in a conflict that has affected not only the Great Lakes region, but also the countries of southern Africa — a conflict that arises from the violation of sacred tenets of the United Nations Charter and has pitted brother against brother, resulting in the death and untold suffering of hundreds of thousands of innocent people, especially women and children — are here today to demonstrate our commitment to a peaceful resolution of the crisis in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and to urge the Security Council to help us bring peace to that country.

Madam President, let me at the outset emphatically and categorically state that the Southern African Development Community (SADC) allied forces have no territorial or other hidden ambitions or agendas in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. We are in the Congo at the invitation of the sovereign Government of that country and in accordance with SADC decisions on collective security. Indeed, our defense objective — that is, the defense objective of the allies — is code-named

"Sovereign Legitimacy". We are there to uphold one of the most fundamental principles of the Charter of the United Nations, namely, respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of States and non-interference in the domestic affairs of a sovereign country.

The Council need not be reminded that it was in pursuit of those same fundamental principles that the international community readily went to war in the Gulf only a few years ago. It is common knowledge that it was my country that held the presidency of this body when that momentous decision was taken. It is these same fundamental principles of the Charter that, in its resolution 1234 (1999), the Council acknowledged and committed itself to uphold and protect in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. But alas, little has been done since then to implement them.

As we have said on many occasions, the SADC allied States are committed to peace in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and in the subregion as a whole. The war in the Democratic Republic of the Congo is a terrible tragedy for all of us in the region. It is a war that should never have taken place. We acknowledge that if there had been sufficient consultations in our region we could have avoided it. Lessons have been learned from this tragedy. That is why from the very onset of the conflict the SADC allied States advocated dialogue as a means of settling the conflict. To advance that peace objective, several summits were held, beginning with that held at Victoria Falls on 7 and 8 August 1998, and followed by several others held respectively at Pretoria on 23 August 1998, at Durban in September 1998, and again at Victoria Falls on 7 and 8 September 1998, culminating in the ceremony for the signing of the Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement on 10 July 1999.

Even as we fought each other in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, we never believed that the conflict could be settled by force of arms alone. It was always clear to us that negotiations, in the end, were the logical and sensible way of resolving the conflict. The Lusaka Peace Agreement is a vindication of the collective wisdom of the parties to the conflict in choosing dialogue over arms as the best way to end the conflict. Some members of the region indeed made a serious mistake by initiating the conflict in the first place. But today, all members have shown courage, vision and wisdom in negotiating an end to the conflict. We are here, therefore, to call upon the Council, as the custodian of peace and security in the world, to assume its role and responsibility by immediately sending both observers and peacekeepers to the Democratic Republic of the Congo. To date, the Security Council has, to our disappointment, been slow and hesitant in welcoming and strengthening our regional peace agreement.

The months that have elapsed since the signing of the Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement have been most frustrating, as they have exposed the dangers inherent in delayed action by the Council in supporting the peace process in the Congo. In a situation without observers and monitors, for months on end, troops and their commanders on the ground were expected to rely on the good faith of their erstwhile opponents, whom they suspect of being cunning and skilful, as all practitioners of the art of war are trained to be. In such a situation, it is inevitable that the commanders will always try their utmost to ensure that their men are not exposed to sudden attack, or somehow encircled or outmanoeuvred by the other side. Any troop movements by one side are read and interpreted as threats by the other and have, on occasion, led to violations of the Ceasefire Agreement. While this is regrettable, we, as parties to the Agreement, have exercised maximal restraint despite the number of violations that have occurred in the context of the unsupervised and unmonitored Ceasefire Agreement. Indeed, full-scale war has not resumed, and the Agreement has continued to remain broadly in place, as important elements of the Agreement have, in spite of the problem of resources, continued to be implemented by the parties.

The Joint Military Commission established as envisaged by the Agreement has been functioning despite resource constraints. The Commission is present in four regions, as President Chiluba has said, with headquarters in three of them: Kabinda, Boende and Lisala. It has developed programmes on such key tasks as the withdrawal of foreign troops, the disarming of armed groups, disengagement of forces, release of prisoners, and the provision of humanitarian corridors. The Political Committee of ministers, another institution envisaged in the Lusaka Agreement, has been established and has been meeting often to carry out its important responsibilities of guiding the peace process.

At its last sitting, held in Harare last week, on 17 and 18 January, the Committee took some quite important decisions with a view to promoting the peace process. First it, *inter alia*, reaffirmed the fundamental nature of the Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement as a basis for solving the conflict in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Secondly, it solemnly recommitted all the parties

to the Lusaka Agreement and to the faithful observance of the provisions of that Agreement. Thirdly, it designated 18 January 2000 as the date on which parties to the Agreement restated — that is, renewed — their commitment to the Agreement. The effect of that decision is to make "R-Day" — Restatement Day — replace the "D-Day" of earlier arrangements for all the remaining tasks under the agreement. This was an important decision in view of the difficulties that had arisen to establish a "D-Day" in the Lusaka peace process, since the various parties had signed the Ceasefire Agreement on different dates.

Besides those institutions, we have the recent appointment of our brother, His Excellency Sir Ketumile Masire, former President of Botswana, as the Facilitator to promote the Congolese national dialogue, a crucial aspect of the Lusaka Peace Agreement. These and many other key elements have now been accomplished. Much that has been achieved has been done largely using the resources of the belligerents and of donors. Some donors have pledged support for these efforts, and we say "thank you" to them. We now wish to urge those that have made pledges and have not yet honoured them to do so, and those that have not yet pledged to consider doing so.

As partners involved in the search for peace in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, we, the countries of the region, are disappointed and frustrated by what we perceive as the lethargic manner in which the Security Council has responded to our call for assistance and urgent action. To date, after months of procrastination and foot-dragging, we do not seem to be any closer to any action by the Council on the deployment of the much-needed and long-awaited peacekeeping force in the Congo. The closest thing we have to the much-desired action programme is the recent Security Council decision authorizing the Secretary-General "to take the administrative steps necessary for the equipping of up to 500 United Nations military observers with a view to facilitating future ... United Nations deployments". (*resolution 1279 (1999), para. 9)* We say, "Good intention, yes, but no good action to follow the good intention". A review of the Security Council's decisions and actions so far yields the depressing impression that there has been too much time spent on the diagnosis of the situation when the prescription that ought to be administered is already known. In these circumstances, considering the alacrity with which the questions of Kosovo and Bosnia were handled, Africa feels marginalized, neglected and, dare I say it, segregated.

Madam President, when Ambassador Holbrooke visited Zimbabwe, we raised the question of what we perceived as double standards in the Security Council's handling of Africa's problems. With respect to the Democratic Republic of the Congo, we pointed out that because of the magnitude of the human tragedy in that country, none of us could afford to appear on the stage wearing only the mask of commitment; we said that a credible performance was essential. We told him that some members of the Security Council appeared to be aligned against the sovereign independence and territorial integrity of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, or at least to be in favour of those who would deny it. However, we were assured that your great country, the United States, would never countenance acts that violated international agreements. We were told that your concern was that the United Nations had got it wrong twice in Africa, namely in Somalia and in Rwanda, and, hence that it had to exercise caution.

We noted these points, but we now say the time has come for prompt action if the Security Council genuinely desires to buttress the peace process in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Any further delays can only be detrimental to the achievement of the objectives of peace in that country. While we are well advised to heed the lessons of history, we should not allow ourselves to be paralysed by them. The Security Council still has a unique opportunity to redeem itself and restore faith in the United Nations, among the people of the Democratic Republic of the Congo in particular and of Africa in general. Let us remind ourselves of the betrayal of the Congo in the 1960s, when the Congolese nationalist leader, Patrice Lumumba, met his tragic death, and the opportunity for peace and nationhood was dashed because the Security Council, then, as now, had abdicated its responsibilities.

I call upon this body to heed the heartbeats of the people of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Let us help them emerge from the great suffering that has afflicted them. Our presence here as African leaders has indeed raised their hopes, and dashing those hopes will do them irreparable damage.

The people of the Democratic Republic of the Congo await our bold decision eagerly so that they can drive from their midst the spectre of national disintegration. They yearn for the unity of their country so they can banish the hatred that is the handmaiden of civil strife. They look forward to using their independence and freedom in pursuit of the socio-economic goals and ideals of democracy essential for the development of their nation.

What the people of the Democratic Republic of the Congo now require from this meeting of the Security Council, and what we of the region also require, is not more talk of sending observers to their country, but the invoking of Chapter VII of the Charter and the urgent dispatch of peacekeepers to keep the peace. This Council has been observing the situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo from afar for too long; it should now go into the country and try to keep the peace. The message is, peacekeepers now.

Let us agree to send this message of hope to the Congolese people. I want to assure the Council of my nation's commitment to playing its part in affording them the opportunity to work for their destiny free from aggression and interference in their domestic affairs.

The President: I thank the President of the Republic of Zimbabwe for his very important and constructive statement and for his characteristically straight talk, which I appreciate deeply. I also thank him for his kind words to the American presidency.

I now give the floor to Mr. Yoweri Kaguta Museveni, President of the Republic of Uganda.

President Museveni: I should first of all like to echo the congratulations which I know my delegation has already extended to you, Madam President, and your country, the United States, on assuming the Presidency of the Security Council for the first month of the new millennium. I also want to salute your initiative, supported by this Council, to give the highest priority to the consideration of African matters this month.

I thank the Secretary-General for his incisive statement and for his report on the United Nations Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. The report should help focus the discussion of the issue before the Council today.

It is my view that this occasion is not one on which we want to dwell on the background to the unfortunate situation in the Congo that has made the political and security situation in the Great Lakes region so precarious and fragile. I have, since the conflict in the Democratic Republic of the Congo began in 1995, categorically stated the Uganda position on the conflict. I also dispatched two special envoys — our Prime Minister and our Minister of State for Foreign Affairs — to come to the Council to discuss the issues involved.

I will therefore only restate that Uganda and, indeed, the other neighbouring countries of the Democratic Republic of the Congo have legitimate security concerns, which, fortunately, have now been recognized by the region in the Lusaka Agreement, and also by the international community. In fact, a meeting of Ministers for Foreign Affairs and of Defence, which met in Lusaka, Zambia from 14 to 16 January 1999, established a committee on the security concerns of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and its neighbouring countries, whose terms of reference included working out a mechanism to fully and satisfactorily address those concerns.

Secondly, our region, which had just witnessed a most gruesome genocide in Rwanda, in 1994, was on the verge of yet another catastrophe of ghastly proportions as a result of the fallout from the ouster of the murderous regimes of the late Presidents Habyarimana of Rwanda and Mobutu of Zaire. The events that followed, which were to pit our armies against each other, are well known to the Council.

Thirdly, the Security Council must be cognizant of the terrorist role played by the Islamic regime of the Sudan, sometimes using the territory of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, with or without cooperation from Kinshasa, to destabilize the neighbouring countries. The situation in Central Africa, unfortunately, divided for the first time the former anti-colonial freedom fighters of Africa. This is a very unfortunate episode in our history, and we must resolutely put an end to it.

Africans are not new actors on the international political stage. We fought injustice and oppression as a united front for many years. This was one of the reasons that caused us to append our signatures to the Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement as a concrete framework for ending the sad events in our region. We take the Lusaka accord very seriously and challenge all the parties to do likewise.

I have stated before, and reaffirm, that the Lusaka accord deserves our total support because it addresses, in a comprehensive way, all legitimate and security concerns of all the parties. It addresses the long, drawn-out internal problems of the Congo right from the time of Mobutu. Secondly, it addresses the concerns of the neighbours, including Uganda. Thirdly, and most importantly, it restores the unity of Africa. Lastly, it promises peace and prosperity in our region, because, with its full implementation, we can turn our whole

attention to issues of national and regional development. For all these reasons, we will oppose any parties that adopt an adventurous attitude that flouts this Agreement. I take this opportunity to renew Uganda's total and unequivocal support for the Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement.

I know that my colleagues have variously alluded to the salient provisions of the Lusaka accord. I will nevertheless repeat some of them, so that this Council may take them into account in charting the way forward.

The Agreement provided for a ceasefire and troop standstill, and, as I mentioned earlier, a Political Committee is in place to work out the details of the ceasefire and the modalities of its implementation. We urge that the work of this team be supported by the international community and that, when a fully fledged united international involvement is agreed upon, the Committee's activities be coordinated with those of the United Nations Mission.

The security concerns of the neighbouring countries and of the Congo have been recognized, and a committee has been established to resolve the question of the destabilization of neighbouring countries by elements operating from the Congo territory. In this regard, we agree with the recommendation of the Secretary-General that to create the conditions for a lasting peace in the subregion it is vital to include the security of the borders of the States concerned, their territorial integrity and their full enjoyment of their natural resources, and that at the appropriate time a regional conference on peace and security in the region must be convened.

I therefore see as a red herring the repeated talk about the territorial integrity of the Congo, because this is not the issue. The issue is not the territorial integrity of the Congo. My country supports the territorial integrity of all the countries in Africa, so the territorial integrity of the Congo is not the issue. It has not been the issue throughout this conflict.

The issues are as follows. It is important for the Security Council to remember that since 1960, approximately 1.2 million Rwandans, 400,000 Burundians, 800,000 Ugandans and many Congolese have been exterminated extra-judicially by the fascist regimes of Kayibanda and Habyarimana, leaders of Rwanda; Michombero of Burundi; Idi Amin, the monster of Uganda; and Mobutu. This is the issue — not the territorial integrity of the Congo, not all of these red herrings that are being floated around.

In the century that has just ended, only Hitler's Germany and Pol Pot's Cambodia could compete with our area with respect to these horrific stories. We have no competition in terms of horrific stories, aside from Hitler's Germany, where 6 million people were killed, and Cambodia's Pol Pot. These are our competitors. This is the issue: the human being is the highest form of God's creation in terms of intelligence. To find, therefore, that approximately 2.5 million citizens of the contiguous countries of the Great Lakes region have been extra-judicially killed in the period from 1959 to date is something the patriots of this area have rejected for good. We will not allow ourselves to be killed without resisting. We are not chickens to be slaughtered by demented political actors. We expect the international community to support us in this. That is why the Security Council was set up.

Another red herring was floated: aggression against the Congo. I did not want to go into this; in fact, it was not part of my speech. But since someone floated this red herring, I have no alternative but to respond.

We had to fight Mobutu's regime in 1996 because it was threatening to visit another Holocaust on our area and to cause another genocide in Rwanda. As we fought Mobutu's regime, we supported Mr. Kabila, who is sitting here. When we were supporting him, he did not call us aggressors. When we supported Mr. Kabila and opposed Mr. Mobutu, we did not hate Mr. Mobutu, nor did we love Mr. Kabila. We had to defend ourselves; that was all. Unfortunately, when Mr. Kabila went into the Government, he forgot about our original problems and why we had supported him. This is inconsistent. Today they are allies, tomorrow aggressors. I do not think that this is consistent.

In the Lusaka Agreement, the opposition groups in the Congo should be involved in the peace process in order to ensure that they cooperate fully in its implementation. We expect a neutral international peacekeeping force to be deployed as an interpositional force in the Congo under the auspices of the United Nations. That is why we propose that this United Nations mission to the Congo should be established under Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations in order to enable it to effectively deal with questions of disarmament, demobilization and the protection of civilians.

We expect all foreign troops to withdraw in accordance with a timetable to be worked out according

to the Lusaka Agreement, by the United Nations and the Organization of African Unity (OAU), under the supervision of the United Nations interpositional force. This aspect presupposes the active cooperation of all of the parties to the Lusaka accord, especially with regard to the obligation to guarantee the security of United Nations and related personnel. Here again I would like to assure the Council of the total cooperation of Uganda.

We also expect that a national conference involving all Congolese political stakeholders will be convened as soon as possible, with the assistance of the OAU and the new facilitator, Sir Ketumile Masire, to determine the political future of the Congo. Uganda supports the appointment of retired President Masire as the facilitator and the reaffirmation of President Chiluba in Maputo as a coordinator of the peace process.

Mr. Holbrooke (United States of America) took the Chair.

We recognize, of course, that these are complex and huge undertakings. The renewal and strengthening of our commitment to carrying them out, as we have just done, should, however, provide the first concrete step forward. We, the regional leaders, must be seen to lead the way. This is what I believe we are here for. However, as I have already mentioned, the international community also has to demonstrate clear and concrete support for the efforts we as Africans are undertaking.

Recent events in all parts of the world have clearly demonstrated that conflict and war are not exclusively African phenomena. They can happen anywhere for a variety of reasons, including the most rampant — that is, the fanning of racial and ethnic hatred. The response of the international community must be even-handed and not lopsided.

The magnitude of an effective United Nations involvement in the Congo, given its size, and, as I said, the complexity of the situation, will be large and certainly costly. The Secretary-General confirms this in his report. But the cost of inaction, as we witnessed in Rwanda, would be too ghastly, more costly and morally repugnant. I appeal to the Council to act now to avoid this type of unfortunate happening. It is the hope of Uganda that the United Nations mandate will be under chapter seven of the United Nations Agreement that thoroughly equips the United Nations to play its part fully.

I should like to conclude by once again reiterating our appreciation to the President and to the Council for affording us this opportunity to discuss a very important and urgent priority that has dogged Africa for four decades now, starting with the murder of Patrice Lumumba in 1961. We are happy that this is taking place here at the United Nations and particularly in the Security Council, whose primary mandate is the maintenance of international peace and security. This should mark the beginning of a new era of reconciliation, peace, stability and prosperity in the Great Lakes region. The timing of this dialogue could not be more appropriate.

Mrs. Albright (United States of America) returned to the Chair.

The President: I thank the President of the Republic of Uganda for his important and strong statement, and for his kind words addressed to the American presidency.

I now call on His Excellency Mr. Pasteur Bizimungu, President of the Republic of Rwanda.

President Bizimungu: I would like to express my country's appreciation for the initiative taken by the current presidency of the Security Council to devote some time to and to focus on Africa's problems. Our personal participation in this meeting is out of the conviction that we can move away from the rhetoric to concrete actions in our search for solutions to Africa's problems.

Exactly six years ago, in this very Chamber, and indeed in the United Nations Secretariat, there were numerous debates on the events that were engulfing my country, Rwanda. Sitting in the United Nations Security Council as a Rwandese, I cannot help but reflect on what led to the establishment of this important body. When the United Nations Charter was adopted in San Francisco in 1945, and when the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide was adopted in Geneva in 1948, the spirit was, "Never again shall we let it happen".

I will not delve into what went wrong in the United Nations during the 1994 genocide in Rwanda, or what went wrong in Rwanda itself. I believe the story is well known. Indeed, there have been many versions, which led the Secretary-General to appoint an Independent Inquiry into the actions of the United Nations during the 1994 genocide in Rwanda. That commission of inquiry, led by Mr. Ingvar Carlsson, recently produced its report.

It is a very important report, and it should be given special attention for two reasons; first, its relevance to the problem of the Democratic Republic of the Congo; and second, its specifics on Rwanda and United Nations operations since 1993.

There should be no mere *mea culpa* attitude to this report, but rather a practical approach that addresses the consequences of our inaction. I took note of the words pronounced by our Secretary-General upon receiving the Carlsson report. He stated,

> "of all my aims as the Secretary-General, there is none to which I feel more deeply committed than that of enabling the United Nations never again to fail in protecting a civilian population from genocide or mass slaughter".

This is what today's debate is all about. A debate on the situation in what has become known as the Great Lakes region, and more particularly in the Democratic Republic of Congo, is a debate on how we can get our act together to prevent and punish the crime of genocide, mass murder, war crimes and international terrorism.

When we failed to stop genocide in Rwanda, those who committed it got away into what was then Zaire, now the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Two subsequent United Nations investigations established that these criminal elements were utilizing Congo territory to launch attacks through Rwanda and the neighbours, utilizing refugee camps and enjoying protection under international law. The decision to end that scandal failed to raise our collective enthusiasm. It was later established that these forces — Ex-FARS and Interahamwe — linked up with other negative forces, mainly from Uganda and Burundi, set up a crime-driven network of arms supply and wrecked havoc in our countries. Once again, there was no action on the part of the United Nations. Two wars linked to an attempt by our countries to protect our citizens — indeed to prevent genocide, terrorism and war crimes — ensued.

Today we want to appeal to the United Nations to take over that responsibility, through the mandate given to it by our region in the terms of the Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement. There have been numerous efforts in the past to look for solutions at the regional and international levels. We all recall a number of Security Council resolutions on the matter. We also recall the summit meetings of Victoria Falls I and II, Pretoria, Durban, Port Louis, Nairobi, Windhoek and Dodoma. These efforts culminated in the signing of the Lusaka Agreement for a ceasefire in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

However, the Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement is not an end in itself. It is meant to facilitate a process of bringing a durable peace to the region. It is an expression on the part of all signatories that they have the goodwill to attend to the root causes of the present situation in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

I wish to declare once more my country's commitment to the principles of the Lusaka Agreement, as enunciated in its article III. I wish also to state that my country has faithfully respected the ceasefire and regrets the many violations that have so far been committed by some of the signatories. Fundamental to us is article II of the Agreement, which addresses the security of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and her neighbouring countries.

We must always recognize and deliberately work for the implementation of the Lusaka Agreement in its totality. There can be no achievement of peace and security in the region if some of the provisions of that Agreement are taken lightly. While it is true that the main burden of its implementation lies with the signatories, the role of the United Nations is equally significant. That is, indeed, why we are here today.

What does the Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement ask the United Nations to do for the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the region? Here, I need to remind the Security Council that throughout the negotiations on the Lusaka Agreement, we engaged the United Nations in terms of what role it could play in the implementation process. Indeed, the United Nations representative signed the Agreement as a witness who participated fully in the negotiations. Our understanding is therefore that the organs of the United Nations are in full support of the Agreement. Article III, paragraph 11 (a), of the Agreement states,

> "The United Nations Security Council, acting under Chapter VII of the UN Charter and in collaboration with the OAU, shall be requested to constitute, facilitate and deploy an appropriate peacekeeping force in the DRC to ensure implementation of this Agreement; and taking into account the peculiar situation of the DRC, mandate the peacekeeping force to track down all armed groups in the DRC. In this respect, the UN Security

> Council shall provide the requisite mandate for the peacekeeping force."

On the security of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and its neighbours, the United Nations, in collaboration with the Organization of African Unity and the signatories, is expected to neutralize and remove from the Democratic Republic of the Congo all criminal forces; neutralize and disarm armed Congolese who are non-signatory forces and civilians; organize a national army, as agreed by the Congolese parties to the Agreement; and organize an orderly withdrawal of foreign forces.

With regard to the Congolese national political agenda, the Lusaka Agreement calls on the Congolese to engage in negotiations which would culminate in a new dispensation or new institutions comprising all political forces of the country. My delegation is here to urge the Security Council to favourably consider these requests contained in the Lusaka Agreement. The Council has the capacity, and it is the Council's responsibility to do so. All the Council needs to do is to muster the moral authority and courage to do it.

The very first step is obviously to ensure that the ceasefire holds, while other mechanisms are being put in place. We have already had many predictable ceasefire violations. The proper deployment of the United Nations monitors, although of paramount importance, is not a sufficient deterrent. The commitment to this Agreement can be tested, or, better still, reinforced, only through its implementation. That is why we believe that plans to deploy a peacekeeping force in the Democratic Republic of the Congo must be elaborated now, and not tomorrow.

Those who closely follow military activities in the Democratic Republic of the Congo are also aware of air drops of arms, munitions and other war *matériel*, which are being distributed to the negative forces. The Security Council has full responsibility to halt such activities.

The Joint Military Commission (JMC), which is a very important organ in the implementation of the Lusaka Agreement, has started its work. I want to place on record our appreciation to those countries that have contributed financially or made pledges to the JMC budget. May I also appeal for these pledges to be quickly made available. We, the members of the JMC, also have the duty to ensure that the JMC is more dynamic in fulfilling its task. Our representatives on the Joint Military Commission have already made recommendations on a number of issues, including the determination of humanitarian corridors, exchange of prisoners of war and working relations with the International Committee of the Red Cross; mechanisms and procedures for disengagement; mechanisms for disarming and tracking down the perpetrators of crimes against humanity; and a plan for the withdrawal of foreign forces.

But these will remain a dead letter if the Security Council's commitment and mandate remain vague. We are pleased that, finally, all the Congolese parties have agreed on a facilitator; former President Masire has all our blessings.

I therefore call upon the Security Council to adopt an enabling resolution for a comprehensive implementation of the Lusaka Agreement. Rwanda is prepared to adopt any measure which can expedite that implementation.

Let me conclude by reiterating the responsibility of the United Nations to the Rwandese people. We must find a forum in which the Carlsson report can be fully debated and its recommendations implemented. In this regard, the report suggests that

> "The international community should support efforts in Rwanda to rebuild the society after the genocide, paying particular attention to the need for reconstruction, reconciliation and respect for human rights, and bearing in mind the different needs of survivors, returning refugees and other groups affected by the genocide." (*S/1999/1257, annex, pp. 53-54*)

It is in this spirit that my country wishes to engage the United Nations fraternity to ensure that this report does not gather dust on United Nations shelves like so many others before it. I sincerely hope that our deliberations today will inspire the Security Council to move forward more resolutely and give our region reasons for hope and confidence for the future.

The President: I thank the President of the Republic of Rwanda for his important and strong statement and for the kind words he addressed to the American presidency.

I now give the floor to Mr. Salim Ahmed Salim, Secretary- General of the Organization of African Unity.

Mr. Salim: I would like at the outset to express my appreciation to the United States presidency of the

Security Council, and in particular to Secretary of State Albright and Ambassador Richard Holbrooke, for undertaking the important initiative of devoting the month of January in the Security Council to dealing with African issues. We are indeed encouraged by this initiative, which acknowledges the magnitude of the challenges that our continent is currently confronted with and the need for determined and concerted efforts to address them.

In deliberating on these issues, I am confident that the Security Council will appreciate the efforts that are being deployed within the continent to contain the scourge of conflict, disease, economic deprivation and poverty. Indeed, hardly a day passes without initiatives, measures and efforts being made by Africans designed to address the various challenges confronting our continent. However, crucial as these efforts by Africans themselves and their leaders are, if they are to have an effective and sustainable impact, they need clearly to be strongly supported by the rest of the international community.

This particular meeting of the Security Council is devoted to the conflict in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. The unprecedented presence of so many African heads of State at this special meeting is clear testimony to the seriousness with which they and the rest of Africa view the crisis in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. It also reflects their determination to continue to assume their responsibility for seeking a lasting solution to this African problem, whose magnitude and dimension have far-reaching implications. This impressive presence of African heads of State at this Security Council meeting also represents their expectations and hopes for greater solidarity and support from the rest of the international community to complement Africa's own efforts.

This hope and these expectations are predicated within the context of international partnership that is anchored in the concept of our global village, with commonly shared values and destiny. Such international solidarity and partnership will achieve its full potential and significance only when it clearly manifests itself in more coherent and concrete actions by all of us working together to address the many crises affecting our common humanity, particularly, problems of insecurity, instability and underdevelopment in Africa. I need not stress, in this regard, the special nature of the crisis in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and its consequences for that country, for the region and for the continent of Africa as a whole.

On our part, the Organization of African Unity (OAU) has spared no effort in supporting the regional efforts to end the conflict based on the principles enshrined in the OAU Charter, particularly the cardinal principles of respect for the sovereignty, unity and territorial integrity of its member States and the peaceful settlement of disputes. On the basis of our attachment to these principles and our concern that these same principles have been under serious threat in the Democratic Republic of the Congo because of the internal and external dimensions of that conflict, we, in tandem with the region and other partners, have worked assiduously to bring an end to the conflict.

These combined efforts culminated in the signing of the Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement, which constitutes a unique instrument for forging peace and understanding based on the cooperation and good faith of the parties, as well as on the support of the international community.

Since the coming into effect of the Lusaka Agreement at the end of August 1999, the Organization of African Unity has made sustained efforts to fulfil its share of responsibilities for its implementation. In this endeavour, we have been working very closely with all the parties concerned. We have, in particular, benefited from the support and untiring efforts of President Frederick Chiluba of Zambia, the coordinator of the regional peace efforts, and all his colleagues in the region.

We have also worked closely with the current Chairman of the OAU, President Abdelaziz Bouteflika, and other African Leaders, who continue to demonstrate serious concern about the situation and actively engage in support of the efforts to resolve the conflict in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. At every stage, we have endeavoured to coordinate our efforts with those of the United Nations, as our experiences in dealing with conflict situations in Africa point to the need for us to act in a comprehensive and coordinated manner.

I wish to underscore the daunting difficulties that are being confronted in the process of implementing the Lusaka Agreement. In particular, we have had to work hard and persevere to mobilize the necessary financial and logistical support to facilitate the establishment of the Joint Military Commission (JMC) at its temporary headquarters in Lusaka and the deployment of the local joint military commissions in three out of the four identified areas within the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

In this context, it should be noted that the enthusiasm and goodwill that were demonstrated by our partners at the time of the negotiations and signature of the Lusaka Agreement were not accompanied by the required level of support. This was particularly evident when resources were sought to establish the Joint Military Commission, the main organ responsible for monitoring the implementation of the Ceasefire Agreement pending the deployment of the peacekeeping mission by the United Nations. As we meet today, the support given to assist the JMC to perform its tasks has been far below its essential requirements. Nonetheless, the JMC, under the leadership of its Chairman, General Lallali of Algeria, has been striving to perform its duties under very difficult circumstances.

I wish here to join President Chiluba in thanking those countries that have already concretized their pledges in support of the JMC. I wish also to express my gratitude to OAU member States and our partners, who have provided the human, financial and logistical resources that enabled us to establish the JMC not only in Lusaka, but also in three out of the four identified areas in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

It goes without saying that the support of the African States and of the rest of the international community will also be needed as we prepare the ground for the commencement of the inter-Congolese political negotiations and dialogue. I wish to use the opportunity provided by this forum to express our appreciation to the former President of Botswana, Sir Ketumile Masire, for having accepted to serve as the Facilitator following a series of consultations among the Congolese parties to the Ceasefire Agreement, organized by the OAU. I would like to urge the international community at large to provide the necessary political, logistical and financial support to sustain the efforts of the Facilitator in undertaking this crucial and challenging task of assisting the Congolese parties in their search for a new political dispensation for their country.

At the same time, we need to be mindful of the fact that the role which the international community could play in this process has of necessity to be limited in scope and conducted in a manner than can allow the people of the Democratic Republic of Congo themselves, through an all-inclusive process, the time and space that they need to negotiate such a new political dispensation.

It is important also to underscore the interlinkage between the political and the military processes. There is therefore the urgent need for an effective United Nations presence in the Democratic Republic of the Congo in the form of military observers and peacekeepers. It is, at the same time, our fervent hope that the parties concerned will extend the necessary cooperation to facilitate that deployment. We also hope that, throughout this process, the necessary understanding and flexibility will be brought to bear by all the parties concerned.

In this context, mention must be made of the fact that one of the areas of concern in the implementation of the Lusaka Agreement relates to the violations of the Ceasefire Agreement that have been reported. This issue has been a source of concern to members of the Security Council, as it has been for all of us. It is, however, worth noting that, despite the situation created by the violations, the Agreement continues to hold. Moreover, the violations have not eroded in an irreversible manner the commitment of the parties to the Agreement, as the latter have continued to cooperate within the JMC, within the Political Committee and, more recently, in the selection of the Facilitator for their political negotiations.

Let me also at this point acknowledge the fact that the Ceasefire Agreement for the Democratic Republic of the Congo may not be a perfect document, given that it is the product of compromise. However, the Agreement remains the only expression and instrument of the collective will of the different parties to the conflict in the Democratic Republic of the Congo that was negotiated by all of them and accepted by the international community as a viable framework which, if implemented in good faith, would facilitate a return to peace, security, national reconciliation and development in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. We therefore have a collective responsibility to make the Agreement work.

It was against this backdrop that the recently held summit of the Southern African Development Community, which took place in Maputo, Mozambique, on 16 January, urged the signatories to the Ceasefire Agreement to cooperate in a more active manner to ensure the full and successful implementation of that Agreement. Subsequent to the Maputo summit, it was encouraging to note the resolve and commitment that was reiterated by the parties during the last meeting of the Political Committee, held in Harare, Zimbabwe, from 17 to 18 January. That commitment entailed the respect of all the provisions of the Ceasefire Agreement and their implementation on the basis of an updated calendar that was adopted on that occasion.

As we continue to insist, and rightly so, that the parties to the conflict show good faith in the implementation of the Agreement that they freely signed, let us endeavour to effectively assist them in order to achieve the desired objectives of the Lusaka peace Agreement. In this respect, any procrastination will definitely be to the detriment of the peace process. It is therefore our expectation in the continent that the deliberations of the Council will result in a clear commitment and concomitant action for the speedy deployment of United Nations military observers and peacekeeping forces, the size and mandate of which should be commensurate with the magnitude of the crisis in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

It is also our sincere hope that the Security Council will be able to respond positively to the need for concrete support for the facilitation efforts of Sir Ketumile Masire. The intention of the United States Government to contribute to that effort, expressed this morning by Secretary Albright, is certainly a welcome decision.

The perception that the Security Council has been hesitant in mandating the deployment of a force that can go into the Democratic Republic of the Congo and make a difference has, unfortunately, served to undermine the speedy implementation of the Lusaka Agreement. It has also served to strengthen the conviction regarding the unfortunate imbalance that exists in dealing with African crises. While we wholeheartedly welcome the renewed interest and focus of the Council on African issues and problems, it remains our fervent hope that the African agenda of the Council will go a long way in terms of responding to the needs of the moment. We need to recognize the indivisibility of the challenges that confront our common humanity, and the Democratic Republic of the Congo provides us with a unique opportunity to match our words with our deeds.

The purpose of this special meeting is precisely to provide new momentum for the implementation of the Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement and to create conditions for the Security Council to act swiftly and decisively in pursuit of its responsibilities towards the crisis in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, as the principal organ responsible for the maintenance of international peace and security. For there is no denying the fact that if there is one conflict in Africa that has all the attributes of constituting a threat to international peace and security, it is the conflict in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

The task of the international community — and in particular of the Security Council — is not merely to win the battle by creating a temporary peace, but rather to win the war by ensuring a stable and peaceful Democratic Republic of the Congo after the settlement of the conflict. Together we should be able to join hands in support of the parties in the implementation of the Ceasefire Agreement. This Council meeting should provide us with an opportunity to reiterate our collective commitment — the commitment of the parties and the commitment of the international community — to the implementation of the Agreement, and to agree on the best ways, means and modalities to achieve this objective. Failure to do so will represent a serious let-down to the people of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and to the peoples of Africa in general. Furthermore, given the high profile of this Council meeting, such a failure will constitute a particularly poignant setback. I submit that we cannot afford to do so.

The President: I thank Mr. Salim for his kind words addressed to the American presidency.

I give the floor to Sir Ketumile Masire, facilitator of the internal Congolese dialogue.

Sir Ketumile Masire: I wish to express my appreciation to you, Madam President, to Ambassador Holbrooke and to our brother Kofi Annan, Secretary-General of the United Nations, for inviting me to attend this meeting of the Security Council to discuss the situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

This meeting is being held against the backdrop of the increasing threats to the peace and security of the African continent, which continue to militate against the socio-economic development of Africa. This unprecedented series of meetings of the Security Council dedicated to the discussion of African issues — on the initiative of the United States presidency of the Council — is not only welcome, but will help alleviate suspicions, fears and concerns over the commitment of the United Nations, and the wider international community, to issues relating to peace, security and stability on the African continent.

As we are all aware, the crisis in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, more than any other contemporary crisis on the continent today, has pitted a number of countries in the region against each other, and therefore represents a real threat to peace and stability in the Central African region, otherwise known as the Great

Lakes region. This is all the more reason why the involvement of the Security Council is both timely and welcome.

I wish also to express my profound appreciation to President Frederick Chiluba of Zambia and his colleagues in the region, as well as to the Secretary-General of the Organization of African Unity (OAU), for spearheading efforts to resolve the conflict in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and for facilitating the implementation of the Ceasefire Agreement. It is gratifying to note that since fighting broke out in the Democratic Republic of the Congo on 2 August 1998 the OAU, in collaboration with the countries of the region and the United Nations, has been at the forefront of efforts aimed at facilitating a peaceful resolution of the conflict. This has not been an easy task. However, the perseverance of all concerned seems to be paying off at last, and we can, as diplomats in the corridors of the United Nations are fond of saying, claim to be "cautiously optimistic".

The origins of the conflict in the Democratic Republic of the Congo are complex and reflect the internal political, economic and social problems within the country itself, as well as an external dimension relating to the security concerns of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and those of the neighbouring countries. I wish to highlight the fact that throughout the peace process, the inviolability of the national sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Democratic Republic of the Congo has been consistently reaffirmed by the OAU and the countries of the region. Equally, there has also been a strong recognition of the need to address the internal political problems within the Democratic Republic of the Congo, as well as the security concerns of the neighbouring countries. Based on these principles and concerns, the OAU, the countries of the region and the United Nations brokered a Ceasefire Agreement among the belligerents in the conflict in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

There are people present here who are more competent than me to discuss the military aspects of the conflict in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. However, permit me to underscore the important linkages between the military and the political aspects of the conflict in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Indeed, I believe that it was precisely in recognition of this linkage that the ceasefire document itself underlined the need for inter-Congolese political negotiations. I am fully aware of the commitment of the parties as enshrined in the modalities for the implementation of the Ceasefire Agreement. The parties agreed that on the coming into force of the Ceasefire Agreement in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, they would do their utmost to embark on inter-Congolese political negotiations, which should lead to a new political dispensation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Furthermore, and in order to arrive at the new political dispensation and national reconciliation emerging from the political dialogue, the parties agreed upon a number of principles elaborated in the Agreement and its annexes.

I believe that for the success of the all-inclusive inter-Congolese political negotiations leading to national reconciliation, I, as the facilitator, shall be responsible for, among other things, making the necessary contacts aimed at the convening of the inter-Congolese political negotiations within a conducive environment for all participants.

The Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement outlines the framework and objectives of the inter-Congolese political dialogue. In the Agreement the signatories have committed themselves to a political process in which the Congolese parties should agree, *inter alia*, on the timetable and the rules of procedure of the inter-Congolese political negotiations; the formation of a new Congolese national army; a new political dispensation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, in particular the institutions to be established for good governance in the Democratic Republic of the Congo; the process of free, democratic and transparent elections in the Democratic Republic of the Congo; and the promulgation of a new Constitution, which will govern the conduct of affairs in the Democratic Republic of the Congo after the holding of democratic elections. I hope that the calendar of the inter-Congolese political negotiations leading to the establishment of new institutions will be limited to the shortest possible time, bearing in mind the plight of the Congolese people and given the resource constraints.

As would be evident from the foregoing, I am under no illusion that the inter-Congolese negotiations will be anything but a difficult and arduous process. I cannot claim at this point to have answers to the problems in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and neither should anyone in the international community be so presumptuous as to think that we know more about what is best for the Congolese people than they themselves. I have come into the process with an open mind, but also with a strong determination to work with my brothers and sisters from the Democratic Republic of the Congo to help them shape the destiny of their own country. The

responsibility to assist the Congolese parties to achieve this noble objective is therefore a heavy and onerous challenge for all of us.

I believe that the most critical challenge to facilitating the political dialogue would be how to determine the nature and the content of the dialogue and the criteria for participation, and how to organize the infrastructure that will provide the necessary backdrop for the negotiations.

The current goodwill expressed by the international community should be translated into concrete assistance in order to enable the inter-Congolese dialogue to commence while the commitment by all parties to the ceasefire holds. More importantly, I am convinced that international pressure should continue to be exerted on all the parties to remain committed to resolving problems in the Democratic Republic of the Congo through peaceful means.

I also believe that for the inter-Congolese dialogue to succeed, the international community should continue to provide all the requisite resources for the successful completion of the peace process in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. While resources are needed to sustain the military aspects of the Agreement, adequate funding is equally critical for the inter-Congolese political negotiations. If we falter in this regard, then the entire peace process will be in jeopardy. I therefore see an urgent need to ensure that a group of competent personnel is made available to buttress the facilitation effort.

The period of the negotiations will entail extensive travel and consultations with all relevant players, including the mediator, President Chiluba, other regional leaders and the parties to the conflict. I therefore wish to emphasize that the entire process will be costly, calling for concrete support by all countries of goodwill, for in the pursuit of peace there should be no room for neutrality. This Council, I believe, should move beyond pronouncements and translate the goodwill gestures made so far into a collective international undertaking. In making this appeal, I am aware that time is not on our side. We should move with greater speed than ever before. This meeting should accelerate the peace process if our efforts in the Democratic Republic of the Congo are to have any meaning for the people of the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

Once again, allow me to reiterate my appreciation for having been associated with this momentous meeting of the Security Council on the Democratic Republic of the Congo. In undertaking this enormously challenging task, I look forward to, and count on, the Council's strong support.

The President: I thank Sir Ketumile Masire for the important work he is about to undertake, and also for his kind words addressed to the American presidency.

Mr. Gurirab (Namibia): On this momentous occasion, we can see that different elements of history and current affairs have converged, engendering great expectations for the people of Africa, and especially for our suffering sisters, brothers and innocent children in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. No one can blame the Congolese people, because they are only expecting and yearning for peace, justice and personal safety in their own country. Their hearts are filled with hope that, at least this time, there will come from the Security Council a renewed resolve to speed up peace, save lives and prevent more bloodshed in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

The date 17 January 2000 was the thirty-ninth anniversary of the assassination of the Congo's martyr and Africa's hero, Patrice Lumumba. Like President Mugabe, I recall with satisfaction another important Council meeting on Africa that you, Madam President, convened on 25 September 1997 and that some of our leaders addressed. As the President of the General Assembly, I have taken action on the report of the Secretary-General that was requested at that meeting and that has been the subject of deliberations by the Assembly. I congratulate you warmly, Madam, on assuming once again the presidency of the Council.

I join you, Madam President, and the Secretary-General in welcoming our esteemed guests to the United Nations and to the Security Council, and, in particular, in thanking them all for the timely and important contributions they have made with such clarity and candour.

This is a historic meeting because of all that we can remember from the past, all that we can see around us and all that we can hear in the strong views coming from the heads of State. President Nujoma, my head of State, regrets his unavoidable absence. He has, however, invested me with all that I need to represent him and to speak on behalf of the Republic of Namibia.

By their solid presence, after having traveled such long distances from Africa, our leaders are demonstrating their collective determination to do everything possible to

inject fresh momentum into the peace process in the Democratic Republic of the Congo so as to move it forward on a sustained basis. Nobody is suggesting that the road ahead will be easy. There are still some problems and uncertainties, and references have been made to them today. That notwithstanding, everyone, I believe, wants the bleeding and the crippling bickering to end forthwith, to be replaced by partnership, rededication and a comprehensive and durable peace in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. The whole of the Great Lakes region and Central Africa also need peace and rebirth, for they are inseparable and their destiny is one. Africa's destiny is one.

The President's seat was occupied on Monday two weeks ago by Vice-President Al Gore, who on that occasion expressed strong and welcome views on Africa's problems and needs and who offered help which we appreciate. The Security Council's "month of Africa" has been busy and productive in many ways. That is a result of the outstanding leadership and industry of Ambassador Richard Holbrooke, who recently paid a high-level visit to Africa for consultations with some of our leaders who are present here today. Ambassador Holbrooke has started a dialogue with Africans, which we welcome, and has launched commendable initiatives. There is still time left for more, and we are ready to cooperate with the United States presidency towards a win-win outcome.

So far, the Security Council has dealt with the devastating HIV/AIDS pandemic in Africa, in all respects from the virus and the disease to the cure and the cost. This was followed by Council meetings on the conflict situations, humanitarian needs and refugee crises in Angola and in Burundi as well as on the effects of the spillover of those tragedies into neighbouring countries. And today, we are discussing the unfortunate and imposed situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. The leaders have addressed this problem extensively.

In his latest constructive report on the Democratic Republic of the Congo (S/2000/30), the Secretary-General has provided us with an analysis of the situation and has put specific recommendations before the Council for its consideration. Furthermore, in his introductory statement this morning, the Secretary-General has supplemented his report with additional ideas. We thank him for that, and we urge the Security Council to act on those recommendations.

One of our deepest anxieties is about what happens next, after the "month of Africa", on the Council's calendar for the rest of this year, next year and beyond, to firmly keep the focus on Africa. We know that the rotation of the Council's presidency does not nullify the continuity of its previous undertakings. Namibia, as a member of the Security Council, will certainly play its part to ensure that that vital focus is maintained so long as we are still on the Council.

Important views and concerns have been expressed in this debate about virtually all aspects of the issue, from the ugly background and the current impasse to the way forward to bring about peace, the withdrawal of uninvited troops and normality in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. We must keep these thoughts in mind as we seek practical and lasting solutions, without compromising frankness or honesty.

Destabilization of the Democratic Republic of the Congo will do no good, but only harm, to Africa, and particularly to the immediate neighbours of that country. On the other hand, comprehensive peace, stability and cooperation will benefit all and will restore Africa's dignity. It is a political solution that the Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement — regardless of the frustrating and needless delays — is all about. Its implementation is the issue.

It was said a very long time ago that there is a time for everything: a time for war and a time for peace, a time to kill and a time to heal. Now is the time for peace and for a new beginning in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. This comes from a member of the generation of Namibian freedom fighters.

Last July, the African leaders held in Algiers the last summit of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) in the now bygone millennium and the twentieth century. The letter and the spirit of the Algiers Declaration eloquently and forcefully emphasized the sanctity of African life and called for an end to military takeovers in favour of democratic elections. Moreover, the African leaders resolved that 2000 will be Africa's year of peace, security and tolerance. To this end, they renewed collectively and severally their commitment to and respect for the United Nations and its Security Council in the maintenance of international peace and security, a call for continued partnership and cooperation.

Let me add in passing that the African leaders also deplored the unilateral use of force in international relations outside the duly conferred mandate of the United Nations Security Council. They stressed that such a use of force will open the way to practices inimical to world peace and security. That is Namibia's view as well.

It is also, in a nutshell, Namibia's contribution to this debate. We have resisted the urge to deal with all the burning issues and to give reasons why Namibia is in the Democratic Republic of the Congo at the expressed invitation of the legitimate Government of President Laurent Kabila and in response to the request by a fellow Southern African Development Community (SADC) member State. We have refrained because Namibia's position is well known.

However, before concluding I would like to underscore the following four cardinal points briefly.

First, Namibia steadfastly reiterates its unwavering adherence to the Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement, excepting for the obvious need to update the timetable and the related technical modalities. It is not the already negotiated and signed text of the Ceasefire Agreement which is the problem. No. The real problem is the demonstrated lack of political will and vision for the future of certain parties.

There is also the problem of interference by some of the other interlocutors who are not being too helpful because they seem to have their own hidden agendas and pursue a different outcome in the Democratic Republic of the Congo than the one that most of Africa and the rest of the international community want. Clearly such acts are a blatant violation of the sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence and unity of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Let me reiterate that the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Democratic Republic of the Congo must be respected.

Secondly, for Namibia it is really axiomatic that the Joint Military Commission (JMC) and the United Nations Observer Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC) should at all times consult, coordinate and act together until the end and to the satisfaction of all the relevant parties involved, above all to the satisfaction of the Government and the people of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. It should be mentioned, however, that the JMC faces an acute lack of resources. This has been repeatedly mentioned, and Namibia joins in calling attention to this. Namibia has contributed to the funding of the JMC, and we call on the international community to assist in this regard.

We welcome the presence of the Secretary-General of the OAU at this meeting. We are happy to see the growing cooperation between the Secretary-General of the United Nations and the Secretary-General of the OAU, and we urge them to continue.

Thirdly, whatever declaration or explanatory note may emerge from New York must be clear and helpful to the peace process and not create any room for new misunderstandings or tampering with the substantive text of the Lusaka Agreement. We must be able to look to the future and go forward with confidence when we leave New York. Thus, the explicit reaffirmation of the political will here by all of us to move the process forward is what is most needed at this time.

Fourth and last, we heartily welcome the appointment of Sir Ketumile Masire, former President of Botswana, as the facilitator for the Democratic Republic of the Congo. We will offer our good neighbour all that we can to make his daunting task a success. To succeed, Sir Ketumile will require adequate and all-round resources as well as strong political and technical backup from the United Nations and the rest of the international community. Needless to add, Africa, and in this case the Democratic Republic of the Congo, needs the same political considerations and similar magnitude of mobilization of resources as Kosovo and East Timor. In this regard, we call for the speedy deployment of a United Nations peacekeeping force in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, military observers and peacekeepers alike, under Chapter VII of the United Nations Charter.

The Democratic Republic of the Congo is a unique problem which must be treated as such. The resolution we expect from the
Council should be consistent with this requirement and also take into consideration the recent decisions taken by African regional leaders in Maputo.

Any conflict and/or its effects have humanitarian consequences on the people concerned. The people of the Democratic Republic of the Congo are no exception. Namibia calls upon the international community to continue to provide generous assistance in the United Nations Inter-Agency Consolidated Appeal for 2000.

I cannot end without paying a well-deserved tribute to and congratulating the United Kingdom's Permanent Representative, Sir Jeremy Greenstock, for his sterling service as Council President at the end of the last millennium and of the century and especially for the unprecedented, interactive meeting he convened on Africa. His presidency concluded with a memorable reception in the Delegates Lounge on 29 December. On that occasion, he invited me to join him and the Secretary-General to toast the old and the new alike. This

is a part of a vision I expressed on that occasion, and I quote myself:

> "Let us welcome the new millennium and the new beginning with a universal kinship of spirit and enlarged kindness towards one another".

I also said:

> "If we do that — and we must — we will be able to create more favourable conditions for a lasting peace...human security and prosperity that all of us can share in." *(ibid.)*

That is my dream for the sake of the world's children. Africa, Africa, Africa will rise again, and peace will come to the Democratic Republic of the Congo as well, with the assistance of the United Nations, the Organization of African Unity and the friends of Africa worldwide.

The President: I thank the President of the General Assembly and Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Namibia for his eloquent and kind statement and for the very kind words he addressed to the American presidency, Ambassador Holbrooke and Vice-President Gore.

In view of the lateness of the hour, I intend, with the concurrence of members of the Council, to suspend the meeting until 3 p.m.

The meeting was suspended at 1.30 p.m.